



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

FORMER SCHOOL TEACHER SENTENCED ON CHILD PORN CHARGES

Cullman man targeted as part of international child porn investigation

BIRMINGHAM, AL — Michael A. Holt, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and United States Attorney Alice H. Martin of the Northern District of Alabama announced today that Patrick Odiam was sentenced today on one count of receipt of child pornography and one count of possession of child pornography.

Odiam, 30, of Cullman, Alabama, was sentenced by Chief United States District Judge U.W. Clemon to 60 months in prison, and was given two years supervised release after the prison term is served. Odiam was convicted on these charges on August 27, 2004.

The investigation and arrest of Odiam are part of a massive international child pornography case. In what is believed to be the first time the U.S. government has targeted the financial side of Internet child pornography, ICE agents began looking into Regpay, an Internet billing company in Minsk, Belarus. In January 2004, the company was charged with money laundering as well as providing credit card billing services for 50 child pornography websites worldwide and operating at least 4 child porn websites on its own. To date 35 people have been arrested in the United States, France and Spain including three officers of Regpay's top officers in Europe. The investigation has also resulted in guilty pleas by two officers of Connections USA, a Florida firm that processed Regpay's U.S. credit card transactions, and two guilty pleas by individuals affiliated with LB Systems, Inc., a California firm that helped Regpay process credit card transactions.

Having dismantled the leadership of this enterprise, ICE agents are focusing on those who purchased child porn subscriptions from these sites. Some of the subscribers arrested to date include an elementary school teacher, priests, school principals, school coaches, school janitors, camp counselors, campus ministers, pediatricians, circus clowns, Boy Scout leaders, police officers, firefighters, and many others with direct access to children. Some of these individuals were also found to have been involved in the production and distribution of child pornography.

The ongoing investigation is part of a larger initiative, Operation Predator, a nationwide ICE effort to protect children from sexual predators, including those who travel overseas for sex with minors, internet child pornographers, criminal alien sex offenders, and child sex traffickers.

ICE encourages the reporting of suspected child predators and any suspicious activity through its toll-free hotline at 1-866-DHS-2ICE. This hotline is staffed around the clock by investigators.

Suspected child sexual exploitation or missing children may be reported to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, an Operation Predator partner, at 1-800-843-5678 or <http://www.cybertipline.com>.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.